

OLD ELPHINIANS NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2006

Dear Old Elphinians

I do hope you are all keeping well. The main purpose of this newsletter is to publish the minutes, give you any old girls news, but mainly to remind you of the Service of Thanksgiving for the school in St Elphin's Church, Warrington at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday 11th March 2006. We plan to offer light refreshments after the service so I would be grateful if you could fill in the form at the end of the newsletter and return it to me either by post or Email or even give me a ring if you prefer.

The AGM and lunch was very successful and hopefully enjoyed by all who attended. Sadly Peter Pollard was not too well and therefore unable to attend, but he assures me that he is feeling better and hopes to be at the church service in Warrington. He sends his best wishes to all of you.

The new database with email addresses seems to be working reasonably well but the last email I sent out about an auction, which was taking place, resulted in several emails being returned. Please, if you alter your email address, could you let me know?

The next AGM has been fixed for Saturday 18th November 2006 at the Water Sports Centre in Nottingham. I will be sending out final details later but please put the date in your diaries.

With best wishes

Christine

Minutes of the AGM held at Maclagan Hall, St William's College on the 19th November 2005.

Before the meeting commenced Christine asked all those present if there was any

objections to Judy Crook chairing the meeting on behalf of Peter Pollard who was ill. There being no objections Judy opened the meeting with prayers and remembered those who had died during the past year. Miss Mayhew (ex headmistress), Mary Scudamore, Eileen Smart (ex secretary of the Old Girls).

Judy also brought greetings from Pam Simpson, Ann Hodgson, Elizabeth Wass, Michelle Hawthorn and Jane Marsh (nee Moorcroft).

Apologies were received from Ruth Roseveare, Isobel Murray, Jane Bealby, Katrina Codling, Louise Bacon, Liz Barwick, Ann Mitchell, June Gibson, Mary Goodman, Peter Pollard, Jill Lock, Jane Holmberg, Ann Brisbrown-Lee, Heather Woodcock, Patricia Miles, Sarah Scott, Tanya Luke.

As the minutes of the meeting held on the 9th October 2004 had been circulated previously they were taken as read.

Proposed Jill Reid
Seconded Liz Rixon

Matters Arising

Bank Account. Originally it had been decided that there would be four signatures on this account, but as there was no longer a Principal of the School it was proposed that there would be three. Peter Pollard, Christine Tew and Teanie Dornan.

Proposed Kathryn Dickens
Seconded Helen Jay.

Secretary's Report

Christine reported that the new database was in place in her computer and approximately 75% of members had email addresses, which cut down considerably on postage. It was however important to notify her of both change of address and email address when applicable.

Treasurer's Report

Most of the previous years finances had been dealt with by Peter Pollard in an Old Elphinians account which he had opened for the original York Reunion but the money had now been transferred into an account in the Nationwide Building Society. Christine had done research into this and it proved to be the most suitable account for a society. Unfortunately the previous Treasurer had closed an account with the Nationwide so all the signatures had to be sorted out once again, not an easy job when the three signatories lived in different parts of the Country. There was £4,800 in the account and Teanie would once again be in charge of this.

Election of Officers

Secretary Christine Tew
Proposed Phoebe Milton
Seconded Teanie Dornan

Treasurer Teanie Dornan
Proposed Liz Waters
Seconded Sheila Allen

AOB

Judy Crook then spoke on behalf of Peter and expressed her sadness at the closure of the school. She had been to the auction and had bought several of the silver cups, which she hoped to distribute to old girls to whom they were meaningful. (Any donations received would go to the shipping costs for equipment export*). The school uniforms,

which had been left in the school shop had been sent to Romania and were being put to good use there. Science equipment* was rescued and is being sent to a school in Malawi. (*Since the meeting more items have been rescued and sent to good homes.*)

She then invited Rosemary Cuff (last deputy head) to tell us of the last days of the school.

Friday 4th March 2005.

Some pupils' parents had asked for a meeting with the Head as their daughters would be starting in the 6th form in September. They wanted to know what courses would be on offer. During this meeting, they got a feeling that things were not quite right.

Sunday 6th March 2005.

The Head rang me in the evening to say that she was ill and would not be in school on the Monday. She asked me to take charge and warned me that some parents were not happy.

Monday 7th March 2005.

Some pupils were anxious and questions were being asked as their parents had discussed Friday's meeting with them. Other parents came to see me as they had heard rumours. The press had got hold of some information from parents and were ringing me for a statement. The heating was switched off!

Tuesday 8th March 2005.

The phones had been cut off and local traders were refusing to supply us with food/milk etc. as they hadn't been paid. After several attempts over two days to contact the owners for information, I heard that one would come at teatime to meet staff

At 4 p.m. he arrived by helicopter and asked me to sign a statement, which told us that the school would close with immediate effect. I refused to do this explaining that we

had boarders from UK and abroad. and we needed to get them safely housed. We met with the staff and it was a very acrimonious meeting. We persuaded him to let the school stay open until Friday. He agreed, but told us that we had been paid for the last time on Feb 28th and would not be paid for March. The staff were marvellous and continued to work, trying to get the GCSE practical work completed.

Wednesday 9th March 2005

Pupils very upset. Parents were devastated. T.V. and local radio were camped out at the school gates. The owner who had seen the staff agreed to meet the parents in the evening. It was a dreadful meeting – much anger and shouting. The decision remained the same.

Thursday 10th March 2005

We made arrangements to hire St Helen's Church Hall at Darley Dale and to continue teaching examination pupils there. A timetable was drawn up. We had to inform the DfES and local education authority of our closure. We had to write to parents who had registered their children to come to St E's. We had to write to parents living away and abroad to tell them of arrangements. We had to get the files for both staff and pupils and give them out – also to write references for pupils going to other schools. My husband had to buy the stamps to post all these, as we had no petty cash!

Friday 11th March

Our last day – a very subdued atmosphere at first, but the Friends Committee had organised a party/disco for everyone in the Stopford Hall. They spent all their money on this – all pupils had a book token and Easter egg and the staff had planted baskets. We ended with a very moving final assembly in chapel and there were very tearful farewells. At 5 p.m. the locks were changed on the doors and we could no longer get in!!

The pupils are now settled in their new schools but would return to the St E's at the drop of a hat. Most staff have found other work but miss St E's dreadfully. The exam results were excellent despite all the upheaval – credit due to staff and pupils.

Jill Reid thanked Rosemary Cuff for her very moving account of the closure of the school.

Rosemary Chambers then talked about the Brenda Bower St Elphin's School Trust.

Mrs Brenda Bower and her late husband Tom Bower had been great friends of St Elphin's School and former Governors, they originated from Warrington.

Brenda died in September 2001 and left an Estate in excess of £2m one quarter of which was to be left to St Elphin's School, provided that the school was viable and offering a Christian education for three years after her death. There were legal problems with the Will and by this time the school was in grave financial difficulties but eventually a Court Action entitled the school to the legacy. With the School's closure a new charity is being formed to honour the wishes of Brenda Bower in a cy pres scheme,

The Trust requires a Board of Trustees, presently they are provisionally a Rural Dean, the Revd Christopher Harrison, a solicitor and former Governor and friend of Brenda Bower, Mr H J Loveday, Peter Pollard the former Headmaster and Governor, and Stuart and Rosemary Chambers. In addition subsequent to the St Elphin's Old Girls Day Mrs Ann Entwistle has asked to be included.

Cathy Crystall (nee Holmes) reported that she and her husband had bought St Katherine's and would be moving in soon. They also hoped to start a Nursery School in the Chapel if they could reach an agreement with the present owners. There were plans to restore the original buildings to their former glory. Leaflets were available for

members to take which described what would be happening. The new owners being, Audley Court who specialise in retirement villages. Subject to planning, the school is likely to incorporate a number of one and two bed roomed apartments as well as more traditional style cottage dwellings. The main building will be converted for communal use. It is hoped that we may be able to hold our 2007 AGM on the site.

The service which is going to take place Warrington at the Church of St Elphin on the 11th March at 2.30 was then discussed. It was unanimously agreed that the music must be uplifting. Adrienne King with help of Andrew Jackson offered to try to organise a choir to sing two anthems. Psalm 127 would definitely be part of the service. Judy Crook would be liaising with several people including the Rector of Warrington and Christine would keep members informed in the next newsletter. Tea would be provided afterwards hopefully in the community centre which had been part of our original school. *(Tea may not be here as the refurbishment is behind schedule so the Rector is making other plans)*

Date Time and place of next meeting

Christine had made enquires about hiring a room at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham

Teannie had also enquired about holding the meeting at Masson Mills in Matlock Bath.

After some discussion regarding travelling arrangements and ease of access it was voted that the meeting would take place in Nottingham on the 18th November 2006.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12 noon. We then proceeded to the adjacent room where we enjoyed an excellent lunch.

Deaths

Joanna Chung nee Cartwright in Sydney on the 23rd September 2005.

Richmal Ashbee (Niece of Richmal Crompton) died on the 24th November 2005 aged 76. For those of you were at the school in 1990 you will remember her being Guest of Honour at the William Day which celebrated the 100th Anniversary of her Aunt's birthday. She was president of the Just William Society and was literary executor and inherited the copyright on her Aunt's death in 1969. She also completed the last and 37th book in the Just William Series.

News from Old Girls

Catherine Benoist is teaching in a Reception/Year 1 class in Leicester. She has been teaching for three years.

Ruth Spokes is a Teaching Programmes Co-ordinator at St Mary's Hospital in London (which is a teaching hospital) email ruth.Spokes@St-Marys.nhs.uk She is living in London.

Kathryn Shipman is now qualified in Nursing working at Queens Medical Centre in Nottingham. Email Kathrynshipman@yahoo.co.uk

Annabel Gilman 1993-1998 is a Graphic Designer, working for a small design agency in Leeds email annabelgilman@hotmail.co.uk

Louise Benoist is working as a mortgage underwriter in a small family firm in Leicester. She is in a South Leicestershire village with her 6 year old daughter Lucy. Email pidge8me@aol.com .

Hannah Wood has been teaching at a Primary School in Shipley. She is living in

Headingley (Leeds) with Annabel Gilman.
Email hannah1wood@hotmail.com

Jessica Sverdloff is living in Oxford with boyfriend of 4 years (John) and is working as a Nanny. email jsverdloff@hotmail.co.uk

Philippa Heathcote 1992-1999 finally graduated this year with a 2.1 in marketing. She is living with her boyfriend in Leicestershire and Jack Russell dog, Maisy.

Liz Rixon nee Fleming 1956-1965 is living in Somerset and would love to hear from anyone in her year.

Rosemary Cuff Deputy Head when the school closed. Would love to hear from anyone associated with St E's and wanting any info.

Teanie Dornan now doing B&B at Tansley and absolutely loving it. (Was put up to it by Christine Tew last time in York).

Elizabeth M Waters nee Taylor is presently living on the outskirts of Derby and working as a medical secretary at the Derby City Hospital email elizabeth.waters@Derbyhospitals.nhs.uk

Rosemary Chambers (nee Thornton) has now lived in Parwich for 25 years has five grandchildren and four step-grandchildren – enough to keep anyone busy.

Sheila Allen (nee Mosley) 2005 has been a very busy year as the family Company has celebrated its Centenary and has had 12 months of celebrating. Daughter Nicky and former pupil of St Elphins lives in the vicinity and has a daughter who they are fortunate to see on a regular basis. Still playing quite a lot of sport but took up golf in 2000 which she can keep playing well into old age. Life very hectic with working full time and involved in CAB, Whitworth Hospital and PCC etc.

Hugh and Judith Robinson Hugh continues to take services. Judith has just graduated (2.) in Art and Art History at A.P.U. Cambridge and owes her interest in Art to St Elphins (1944)

Sally Gedye still plays tennis (despite advancing years!) and spends a lot of time looking after grandchildren.

Jennifer Marsden nee Dearnaley is enjoying retirement from Inf. Nursing. Holidays abroad (not in school holidays!) Tai Chi and yoga for relaxation.

Mollie Harwood (nee Barsby) 1949-1955 is still living in Nottingham. She has two grandchildren – girl nearly five years and a boy four months. Belongs to the Beeston Musical Theatre Group doing Jesus Christ Superstar next Easter.

Margaret Fielding has been living in Knutsford Cheshire for the past 2/3 years but still has many contacts and therefore visits London frequently. Travelling a lot this year.

Judith Dakin nee Clarke back from Africa and living in Wilts. In contact with **Lucinda Negus** as Judith's sister lives in Wells Somerset.

Edwina Davy retired and living back in Market Rasen, Lincolnshire.

Betty Wareham nee Elizabeth Carson nothing new to report- just getting older.

Kathryn Dickens nee Betterton 1971 – 1980 Juniors and Gresford is living in Portishead near Bristol working part time as an IT manager at a large Trust in Bristol. Two children Hannah nearly 11 and Emily 6.

Maggie Gell nee Hutchinson 1972-1978 lives in Knaresborough North Yorkshire and is working a Chief Reporter for the

Knaresborough Post newspaper. One son David aged 11 years.

Mary Mayo Reeman is still in Stockport and now has 2 grand daughters with one more grandchild expected in May. She is in touch with Di Taylor (Hughes) Beryl Buckley (Latham), Mary Roe (Sockett) Judith Carter (Tuckwell) and several other Ogs..

Marilyn Booth nee Lloyd is living in Shrewsbury and sees Peter Pollard when he comes to sing with friends in the area. She plays in a recorder group and continues with a Welsh group for Welsh conversation.

Rosemary McKeag nee Line is still enjoying working in a local Residential home. She has recently been widowed but is in touch with Mary Reeman with whom she has enjoyed several holidays abroad.

Adrienne King still a spinster! Lives in Harrogate with partner Stephen and two and half year old son, Charlie. Primary School teacher for 16 years and still loving it. She is in touch with Fiona Cooper, Ruth Howarth, Jane Gregory, Rachel Gregory, Lynn Steel and Andy Jackson.

Rachel Southward nee Gregory 1977-1984 now lives in Northumberland about 8 miles from Alnwick. Married to John with two sons Jack aged 7 and Benjamin aged 4. Her sister Jane lives in Southampton and has just had her fourth child (2 boys 2 girls) She is in touch with Adrienne King, Melanie Thompson, Fiona Cooper and Ruth Dodd.

Cathy Crystal nee Holmes is living in Mattock with husband Steve, and they have two children Jamie 8 and Ryan 4 who were both pupils at St Elphin's when it closed. She has lived and worked all over the country and is now buying St Katherine's in the school grounds. They own a limousine business in Matlock (and drive them) and also a new Home Security Company. She is in touch with Emma Jackson, Sarah

Hicks, Clare Duke-Cox and others from her year. She also sees Miss Mellor, Mrs Prince, Miss Reeves, Mrs Hardy and Mrs Cuff.

Heather Reeves ex pupil and teacher is feeling a great sense of loss – but enjoying the chance to continue with her specialist subject with four old pupils and a few others and is making the most of what time is left to her.

Elizabeth Wardle nee Bates 1962-1969 Both her girls are launched into the world – one is doing her PGCE the other working with MIND in Cardiff. Her sister Alison Auld nee Bates lives in Inveriere and continues to work with a Scottish MP. Elizabeth continues as a District Nurse with Marie Curie Nursing in East Yorkshire. She has chickens now – a new interest. She has recently completed a clinical aromatherapy qualification. Her husband John has taken early retirement from the NHS and is working just as hard with volunteer projects. She had enjoyed talking with various old girls but was sad not to see anyone from her time at St Elphins she sends her best wishes to all her old contemporaries and hopes that you might get together in 2006.

Andrew Jackson is now teaching in Epworth near Doncaster 20 years on! Music still important – have mellowed over the years!

Phoebe Milton now has three great grand children and another one due in May! Heavens!

Barbara Brooke Taylor No news this year except for having Di Brooke-Taylor (Lloyd) to stay, still living in North Wales and a visit from Robin Bisset Smith who is about to go into a warden supervised flat in Derby.

Dorothy Edwards is still enjoying retirement.

Olga Putnam nee Mort not quite so mobile now but keeps going and is on the committee of the block of flats where she lives. Recently had a granddaughter after four grandsons.

Anne Dent nee Cooper is still very busy and happy in retirement, doing Botanical painting and learning to play the recorder (She now knows how the C stream felt!)

Muriel Onac is busy in retirement with family (10 grandchildren – lots of musical talent – so often goes to concerts) She is in a USA theatre group and Probus.

Sheenagh McGlashan nee Williams is now retired and has two grandsons and two grand daughters. She still manages to keep fit with running and tap dancing and amateur dramatics. She keeps in touch with Rosemary Yates nee Pirie.

Ann Entwhistle nee Lyon 1947-1951 Powys has retired after 27 years as a magistrate. She is involved in voluntary work at a Runcorn Hospice and has 8 grandchildren between 5 and 18.

Helen Jay nee Wright 1948-1959 Selwyn is enjoying not working. Plays tennis three times a week, busy also with four grandsons 6, 5, 5 and 3 and local Am Drams. Also been the organist in the Parish Church for 26 years.

Christine Mason nee Line 1951-1957 Gresford retired in July and is enjoying free time with 9 grandchildren. Her time is well occupied walking, holidays drama etc.

Rosey Kershaw nee Hill 1952-1959 Kennedy is working three shifts at Stanstead Airport per week. Her first grandchild was born in Australia in June. Plays tennis once or twice a week. Enjoys lacemaking when she has time.

Margaret Oldbury nee Watson 1954-1959 is enjoying retirement She meets up with Rosey Hill (Kershaw), Jill Thomas (Dixon), Judy Gwinnith-Sharp (Furness) occasionally. She enjoys playing tennis twice a week and gardening.

Jill Thomas nee Dixon 1954-1959 Selwyn Since her husband retired from farming they have been running a B&B in Princes Risborough – do go and stay and enjoy some St Elphin's experiences. Website www.thecoppins.co.uk.

Sarah Williams nee Tarbatt now lives on Darley Hillside with her husband and two children Matthew two and half and Charlotte six months old. Still in touch with many school friends Jane Townend, Sarah Davies (nee Lamb), Katie McIntyre (nee Else), Catherine Lees (nee Malkinson), Katherine Savidge, Alex Raper (nee Del Luongo), Nicki Heathcote and Laura-Jane Blair (nee Quick) and of course Nicki Tarbatt (nee Allen) who is her sister in law!

Nicki Tarbatt nee Allen 1979-1992 Powys lives in Ashover (not so far from Darley Dale) She is married and has a little girl called Sophie and another one due in March. She works in Chesterfield as a Speech and Language Therapist and keeps in touch with the St E's lot mentioned above!

Sharon Lusty 1965-1977 Powys 1978-1980 Wilson has lived in York for the past 12 years. She is married to Stephen and they have 4 children Sophie 16, Esther 14, Anna 12 and Matthew 10. She works as an assistant Chaplain at York St Johns College. Email s.lusty@yorks.j.ac.uk or Sharon.lusty@btintnet.com

All the folk who provided the news above were at the meeting together with Pat Long (nee Hodgson) and Jill Reid (nee Chorlton)

Monica Boulton nee Cooke has many happy memories of her school days and friends

that she made. She thinks it is time she retired from the Old Girls but if anyone would like to get in touch with her, her address is Lynwood, 35 Grove Park, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 8QA.

Juliet Saunders nee Davies still lives in Crewe and is working for Cheshire Social Services. Her three children have all left home or are on the verge of doing so – Rhonwen works for the NHS in Preston, Angharad is just completing her Ph.D at Aberystwyth and hoping to go to Greece for a year and Rhodri is about to start the fourth year of his biochemistry course at Oxford. She keeps in touch with Jill Tyndale, Patty Briggs (nee Mountford) and Mary Broughton (nee Daybell). She hopes to be at the service in Warrington.

Judith Barger nee Ashcroft wrote that her father had been a governor at the school for many years and she actually got married in the school Chapel in 1977 by Bishop of Hulme, the school chaplain and the Rector of St Helens. She changed into her dress in the flat belonging to Miss Rhys Jones, head of Wilson!! 28 years later she still has the same husband and three children. She hopes to be at the service in Warrington.

Miss Mary Lamb wrote of her sadness of the closing of the school but pointed out that we must be thankful for all that St E's has meant to so many people and for all that the school has done. After a certain amount of arthritis and a replacement knee she now hops around the neighbourhood on Bluebell her recently acquired mobility scooter. In spite of friends comments about "speed hogs" and "men with red flags" it serves her very well for Church, library doctor and dentist etc. She sends good wishes to all OE's who remember her.

I have been in touch with **Margaret Thompson nee Carmichael** recently who has not been too well this past year but is improving. Kathryn Betterton had spotted a

photograph album on Ebay which had actually belonged to Margaret's Mother. Margaret Houghton and luckily was able to buy it back. My grateful thanks to Kathryn for her interest in all things concerning the school and the old girls.

Service in St Elphin's Church Warrington on 11th March 2006 2.30 p.m.

As mentioned earlier in the newsletter we are planning to provide tea after the service in the church and to help with catering we will need approximate numbers. Please either return the attached form or phone me on 01263 821058 or email me at christine@christew.freeserve.co.uk if you wish to attend.

Adrienne King 1979-1986 and Andy Jackson staff 1979-1986 are trying to gather together a 15-20 voice choir for the above service. "Panis Angelicus" and "The Snow" are the two proposed anthems, so if you are available for a 10.30 a.m. rehearsal on Saturday 11th March at the Church, then please contact Adrienne at home on 01423 888282 or by email adrienneking2@hotmail.com. They are both looking forward to the occasion and meeting and working with old friends. Of course this invitation is open to all ex choir members of the school.

WHAT DID THE SCHOOL MEAN TO YOU? Do you have a special memory? An anecdote? A humorous tale?

The organisers of the service are wondering if there could be a few contributions (1 to 2 minutes) which reflect memories for different generations.

Please consider this and tell your friends. If you have any contributions please email them to jmcrook@tiscali.co.uk or post them

to Miss Judy Crook, 5 Farley Hill, Matlock,
Derbyshire DE4 3LL

*Do hope you have enjoyed reading the
newsletter and I apologise in advance for
any errors. I hope to see many of you in
Warrington on the 11th March.*

Travel to Warrington by **coach** from the
Matlock area is being proposed. Please
telephone Sue Spriggs on **01246 233475** by
the **6th February** if you are interested in this.

Please note I will be posting a list of
persons attending from time to time on
the Yahoo website so that you can see if
any of your contemporaries will be there.
If you are not a member of this, please
email, ring or write to me and I will be
pleased to keep you up to date.

I will be attending the Service in St Elphin's Church Warrington on the 11th March 2006 at
2.30. p.m.

Name/s.....

Number of Persons.

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